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ABSTRACT

This report presents the first annual review of the Even Start/Project Family Program in Seattle (Washington). The program serves qualifying parents and children of families with one or more children ages 1 to 7 years, who live in an elementary school attendance area designated for participation in basic Chapter 1 programs with referrals coming from various community agencies. In its first year, the program served 82 adults and 198 children. The program does the following: (1) identifies and recruits families; (2) screens/prepares parents and children for participation: (3) designs programs and provides support services; (4) promotes adult literacy, provides parent training, and prepares children for success in school; (5) provides staff with special training to work with parents/young children in a full range of instructional services; (6) monitors integrated instructional services; and (7) coordinates programs assisted under Even Start. The staff consists of a program coordinator and two assistant coordinators, and adjunct faculty contracted from Seattle Central Community College (adult literacy, basis skills mastery, and parent education class instruction). Major events in the first year are listed, and recommendations for future evaluation are made. Two appendices contain an intake survey form and a list of the collaborative advisory council members. (JB)

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FIRST ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EVEN START/PROJECT FAMILY PROGRAM

REPORT NO. 91-3
MAY, 1991

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FIRST ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EVEN START/PROJECT FAMILY PROGRAM

Project Family is the Seattle School District's program for accomplishing the three federal Even Start program goals:

promote literacy of participating parents.

assist parents in developing the skills and interest to support the educational growth of their children.

prepare children for success in regular school programs.

EVEN START/Project Family is administered through Seattle Public Schools' Zone one. Eligible participants are qualifying parents and children of families with one or more children ages one to seven, who live in an elementary school attendance area designated for participation in basic Chapter 1 programs. Recruitment of eligible participants is through the District's Chapter 1, preschool programs (i.e., Head Start/ECEAP, CAMPI, Early Childhood Education, etc.), Special Education, Bilingual Education, and other District programs. Referrals also come from the Seattle Housing Authority, Columbia Health Clinic, and other community agencies including the State of Washington Even Start programs.

This review describes selected aspects of the program during the first year of operation (September 1, 1989 to August 31, 1990), and suggests areas of focus for the second year evaluative study of the program. Because of its documentary nature, the review is presented in "journalistic" format, describing WHAT the program has done, WHO did it, WHEN it was done, and concluding with recommendations for a second year evaluation of both process and outcomes.

WHAT: Description of EVEN START/Project Family

EVEN START/Project Family is best described in terms of the seven program activities prescribed by federal guidelines:

I. Identify and recruit families

II. Screen/prepare parents and children for participation

III. Design programs and provide support services

IV. Promote adult literacy, provide parent training, and prepare children for success in school

V. Provide staff with special training to work with parents/young children in a full range of instructional services

VI. Monitor integrated instructional services

VII. Coordinate programs assisted under EVEN START

The following sections give a brief description of these activities. The concluding section contains illustrative examples, vignettes written by EVEN START/Project Family instructors.

I. Identify and recruit families. In 1990, project staff contacted a number of agencies and organizations to present information about Project Family and to recruit prospective participants. The organizations included: Head Start, housing developments, Washington State Even Start, community-based agencies/social service agencies, churches, PTAs, school district personnel.

Other recruitment efforts included distributing flyers, radio announcements, and publishing articles in neighborhood weekly papers. Project Family staff followed up with one-to-one talks with prospective participants by means of telephone and visits.

These efforts and participants' own word of mouth resulted in seventy-seven families being assisted during the first year of actual operation, late winter through summer of 1990. The following summarizes demographic information for the participating families.

Number of adults:	82	
Women		69
Men		13
Number of children	198	
Median age of adult participants	30	
Number of adults whose native language is other than English:	36	
Arabic		12
Spanish		12
Amharic, Tigrinya, or other		12
Number of adults whose ethnic background is other than white:	74	
African American		36
Middle Eastern		14
Latino		11
African		9
Native American		3
Other		1
Average highest grade completed by adult participants	6.5	
Number of children under eight years of age	198	

Statistics on additional descriptors, required by Federal EVEN START legislation, will be reported next year. These descriptors concern family structure, family income, and source of family income.

II. Screen/prepare parents and children for participation. Potential participants were screened by means of an intake form (Appendix A), which was filled out in a confidential meeting with an assistant coordinator. According to federal guidelines, a family was eligible if

It had at least one child between one and seven years of age and lived in a Chapter 1 eligible attendance area

and

the participating adult(s) was below the college level and not enrolled (nor required to be) in a secondary program

and/or

had not obtained a certificate of graduation from high school or equivalent

and/or

reported insufficient mastery of basic educational skills to function effectively in society

and/or

reported an inability to speak, read, or write the English language that hindered his/her getting and retaining a job commensurate with real ability.

Activities to prepare parents and children for participation in the program included a family needs assessment and, if needed, referral to other (health, housing, food, counseling) services. The project's assistant coordinators conducted a family needs assessment during home visits or during on-site appointments. This assessment included:

literacy assessment (Rosenthal's Teach Someone to Read diagnostic test booklet was used as a preliminary literacy measure for native English speakers.)

goal setting for participants

completion of forms (free/reduced lunch application, parent interest survey, immunization record)

Referral to other agencies occurred when participants indicated daily living needs, such as shelter, food, clothing, furniture, medical and dental services, assistance in applying for DSHS services, nutrition assistance, child care/pre-school, special care for the handicapped, employment, arbitration, and mental health counseling. Approximately 270 such referrals were made during Project Family's first year of operation.

The assistant coordinators followed through with participants on the referrals. They provided information to participants relative to working with the service providers, often made initial contact with the providers, frequently helped process the information received, and sometimes accompanied the participant to an appointment.

III. Design programs and provide support services. Assistant coordinators worked with participants to provide Project Family services most in line with participants' situation and needs. The outcome of initial efforts was the Family Educational Plan (FEP) which addressed individual needs, literacy goals, and parent/child interaction.

Participants were assigned to a site and at a time that best suited their schedules, residence locations, and child care needs. Classes, child care, and tutoring for school aged children were provided at two sites, Colman Elementary School in north-central and Gatzert Elementary School in south-central Seattle. Schedule options were as follows:

Colman Elementary School

Mondays and Wednesdays - 6:00 p.m. until 9:00 p.m.
Tuesdays and Thursdays - 9:00 a.m. until noon.
Friday - Staff inservice activities
Saturday - Family activities

Gatzert Elementary School

Mondays and Wednesday - 9:00 a.m. until noon
Tuesdays and Thursdays - 5:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.
Friday - Staff inservice activities
Saturday - Family activities

Laidlaw buses, which the District uses for transporting students, were used to transport families to and from Colman school for evening classes. Depending on location of residence, other participants used bus tokens or occasionally took cabs, both of which were paid for out of Project Family funds.

IV. Promote adult literacy, provide parent training, prepare children for success in school. At the close of 1989, Seattle Central Community College was selected to provide literacy and parent education instruction, which began in March of 1990. Literacy instruction concentrated on increasing basic skills and parenting instruction focused on ten competencies:

child growth/development;

family;

health/safety and nutrition in the home;

children's learning readiness skills;

children's social skills;

learning through play;

guidance and discipline;

parents as teachers;

parents/children/schools in partnership;

community resources.

Program staff went to some effort to integrate the two components, literacy and parent education. For example, parent activities to enhance the child growth/development competency were chart reading, measuring and recording weights and heights, descriptions of children's behavior that required present tense action verbs, etc.

Preparation of children for success consisted of preschool experiences based on the High Scope (Tabor) program. Activities included circle time, planning time for free choice activities, story time, play time, small group activity, large and small motor skills activities, quiet time, and clean-up time. Study/tutoring were provided for school-aged children while parents were in session. Students brought homework, received help with school projects, and received basic skills help as needed. Students who brought no homework were provided with study sheets and/or were encouraged to read books during this time.

Instruction continued through the summer and followed the same schedule of two day and two evening sessions. One session per week focused on literacy and parent education related to upcoming family activities with visits to the Pacific Science Center, the aquarium/omnidome, and Woodland Park. The other session of the week was family centered.

V. Provide staff special training to work with parents/young children in a full range of instructional services. Three inservice training sessions had been provided as of March 1990. Topics and participants are described in the March 1990 Even Start continuation grant application. Staff and contracted literacy and parenting instructors currently participate in monthly inservice training. A second annual retreat for EVEN START/Project Family staff, contracted literacy/parenting instructors, and District staff members is being planned for March of 1991.

VI. Monitor integrated instruction services. Instruction is monitored by recording the staff activities designed to accomplish Project Family's seven process objectives. These process objectives were formulated to assure achievement of the EVEN START goals of improved literacy for parents, parent participation in their children's educational growth, and children's success in the regular school program.

The seven process objectives are listed below, along with the staff activities to accomplish them and to thereby monitor service.

Process Objective	Staff Activities
A. Each participating parent collaborates with Project Family staff to complete a Family Educational Plan (FEP); FEPs will include at least one literacy objective (e.g., open a checking account, register to vote, read a novel).	Collaborate with each parent to write an FEP.
B. Each participating parent will show at least 80% attendance at classes focused on basic skills acquisition.	Record attendance. Summarize attendance on FEP.
C. Parents will attend sessions designed to promote their support of and interaction with their children using activities at the appropriate developmental level.	Record attendance. Summarize attendance on FEP.
D. Parents will attend parent education classes based on the State Even Start curriculum.	Record attendance. Summarize attendance on FEP.
E. Participating children will be engaged in age appropriate developmental activities while their parents are attending classes.	Record classroom observations. Summarize observation data.
F. Preschool children will be enrolled in District programs (i.e., CAMPI, Head Start, ECEAP, Developmental Preschool) and in agencies enrolling children of this project on a space available basis.	Record enrollment.

PL 100-297 requires administrators of each Even Start project to report information such as that obtained from the resulting records. The information is sent to RMC Research Corporation which handles the data entry, analysis, and reporting for the National Evaluation Information System (NEIS).

As the various Even Start projects become established, NEIS will require each to produce evidence of its effectiveness; i.e., evidence that it is meeting the national goals. Seattle's EVEN

START/Project Family has operationalized the national goals by means of the following outcome objectives. Periodic assessment of whether or not these outcome objectives are met will provide evidence of EVEN START/Project Family's effectiveness in meeting the national goals.

A. **Outcome objectives for goal 1:** *Improved literacy for participating parents*

   i. By the end of the quarter, 80% of participating parents will accomplish at least one literacy objective from their Family Educational Plan (FEP). (This objective was met for the two fully operational quarters of the first project year.)

   ii. by the end of the year, 80% of participating parents will show improvement, over initial score, on adult basic education competencies measured by the CASAS. (Assessment of the objective begins in the 1991-92 school year.)

B. **Outcome objectives for goal 2:** *Parent participation in the educational growth of their children*

   i. By the end of a quarter, participating parents will show improvement in attitudes conducive to preparing their children for learning, as measured by the increased scores on Parent/Child Interaction Interview from NEIS. (Assessment of this objective begins during the 1991-92 school year.)

C. **Outcome objectives for goal 3:** *Children's success in the regular school program*

   i. By the end of the year, participating children will show greater language skill gains that the special Even Start reference group, as measured by standard score gains on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT). (Assessment of this objective begins during the 1991-92 school year.)

   ii. After participating in EVEN START/Project Family, Kindergarten and grade 1 students will compare favorably with their nonproject classmates on attendance, behavior, and basic skills achievement. (Assessment of this objective will begin during the 1991-92 school year.)

VII. Coordinate programs assisted under EVEN START. The Collaborative Advisory Council (CAC), whose 17 members represent a broad spectrum of community services, is the focal point of collaborative activities. The CAC is involved with EVEN START/Project Family in a number of ways, including advising in policies which govern the delivery of services; ensuring cooperation and mutual understanding of represented agencies,

institutions and organizations; and providing input into the daily operations of the program. (Appendix B contains names and agency affiliations of the CAC members.)

Among the agencies with which EVEN START/Project Family cooperates and collaborates for social service resources are: King County Public Health, Country Doctor Clinic, and Odessa Brown Clinic for health; Seattle Emergency Housing for housing; Central Area Motivation Program for food; and Atlantic Street Center for counseling. Until recently these services have been arranged and provided on an as-needed basis. Currently, EVEN START/Project Family staff are developing service plans, which build in these services, along with the FEP.

VIII. Illustrative example. Perhaps the best descriptions of how the program operates come from the instructors and the participants. The following vignettes were written by the Project Family literacy instructors.

1. Following is the case of a 57 year old grandmother who came to the program stating that she wanted to learn to read. She was able to write only her first name and unable to distinguish one letter from another. She felt her inability to read contributed to her "failure" in rearing her two daughters of whose children she now has custody.

   Mrs. X's stated need to learn to read was initially approached directly by introducing the traditional beginners reading method; however, Mrs. X was overwhelmed with too much anger, guilt, and problems in general which blocked her ability to concentrate via the direct approach. When she became involved with the "Mommy's Brag Book" project she was allowed to work with her hands, and Mrs. X's learning began. The project requires placing plastic letters on a loose leaf notebook cover to create the title. She began distinguishing letters in the process of lettering the title of her book "Grandma's Brag Book."

   Mrs. X enjoys the attention the program provides for her. She has been actively involved in class discussions to the point that she frequently takes lead within the group. Mrs. X considers herself to be a good cook and took much pride in preparing a dinner for the class.

   She has mentioned her involvement with the children in continuing to work on the Brag Book at home. She took letters home for the children to assist.

   Slow but constant progress is expected in the area of literacy as well as her parenting skills as she continues in the project. She has missed only one day since she began class.

2. Mrs. Y and her three boys came to the program to "get help with the three boys." Mrs. Y was also experiencing problems with her husband who seemed to be making the young son the "scape-goat" of the family.

   Mrs. Y's greatest need was to have an opportunity to "vent" her problem. We met this need both in the class and in one-to-one counseling. Her self-esteem is being enhanced through this opportunity for her to bring various news articles, books, community resource information with our desire to follow through in appreciation of such. She was helped to get library cards for herself and children. She has checked out books and shares reading content with class. She was supported in her effort to get help for one of her boys who is having problems at school.

   She feels good about her ability to take the "parenting lead" in our daily "parent/child" reflection meeting.

   Mrs. Y has expressed many times how the class attendance experience is most meaningful to her in maintaining her marriage as well as how much better she feels in her parenting role.

WHO: Project Family Staff

Project Family's staff consists of a program coordinator and two assistant coordinators. The program coordinator establishes and coordinates the day-to-day Even Start operations; supervises on-site instructors and support services; coordinates participant recruitment and screening, child care, and transportation; and assists the program manager in coordinating project activities with Headstart, CAMPI, Chapter 1, and ECEAP.

The assistant coordinators, under the direction of the program coordinator, recruit, screen, and enroll participants; provide outreach and referrals to cooperating agencies offering emergency services; maintain contact with community resources; and assist instructional staff in assessing academic, social, and personal needs of participants.

In addition to the above full-time Project Family staff, adjunct faculty contracted from Seattle Central Community College provide adult literacy, basic skills mastery and parent education classes. Children's instructors and tutors work on an hourly basis.

WHEN: List of Major Events

Major events in the first year of the program's operation are listed below.

September, 1989	Funding notification

October, November, 1989	Search for Program Coordinator
December, 1989	Seattle Central Community College (SCCC) selected to provide literacy and parenting instruction
	Program Coordinator position offer not accepted
January, 1990	Search for Program Coordinator continues
	Assistant Coordinators hired
	Participant recruitment begins
February, 1990	Program Coordinator hired
	Collaborative Advisory Council begins meeting monthly
	Child care/preschool facility prepared for use
	Intake forms screened, prepared, and participants scheduled into sessions
	SCCC parenting liaison provides instruction for participants
	Program Coordinator attends Even Start National Evaluation Conference
	Recruitment, screening, preparation, and scheduling
March, 1990	Literacy and parenting instructors selected
	Continuation Application submitted
	Service providers network meeting
	Two inservice training meetings for EVEN START/Project Family staff and instructors
	EVEN START/Project Family staff and instructors team meetings begin and are ongoing
	Literacy and parenting instructors begin ongoing instruction
	Implementation of evaluation plan

April, 1990	Ongoing activities
	Preparation for summer component begins
May, 1990	Ongoing activities
June, 1990	Literacy and parenting spring instruction ends
	Summer component begins
July, 1990	Summer component ends
August, 1990	Program year close out

RECOMMENDATIONS

EVEN START/Project Family is well into its second year as of this writing, so that it's time to determine how well the program is accomplishing its outcome objectives (p. 8). The determination should be facilitated by funds being made available for this purpose contingent on approval of the objectives by the Department of Education's Program Effectiveness Panel (PEP).

It remains for EVEN START/Project Family to assure itself that the objectives as expressed, or as revised, are suitable for submission to PEP. Since RMC Research Corporation provides assistance in preparing PEP submissions, it is recommended that the Monitoring and Evaluation subcommittee of the CAC be charged with the task of obtaining assurance from RMC that the objectives as expressed are suitable for consideration by the Program Effectiveness Panel.

A P P E N D I X A

FAMILY			CODE			
		–				
A	A	0	0	0	0	0
B	B	1	1	1	1	1
C	C	2	2	2	2	2
D	D	3	3	3	3	3
E	E	4	4	4	4	4
F	F	5	5	5	5	5
G	G	6	6	6	6	6
H	H	7	7	7	7	7
I	I	8	8	8	8	8
J	J	9	9	9	9	9
K	K					
L	L					
M	M					
N	N					
O	O					
P	P					
Q	Q					
R	R					
S	S					
T	T					
U	U					
V	V					
W	W					
X	X					
Y	Y					
Z	Z					

FORM IB: FAMILY INFORMATION
PART A. PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS AT INTAKE

I am going to ask you some questions about yourself and your family. Your answers to these questions will be kept strictly confidential and will be used for program reporting. They will not be linked with your name.

Reporting Period:
- ○ Dec ○ 1990
- ○ June ○ 1991
- ○ 1992
- ○ 1993

Characteristics of Family Unit

1a. How many persons aged 18 or older, including yourself, live in your household ?
○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 ○ 6 ○ 7 or more

1b. How many persons aged 16 to 18, including yourself, live in your household ?
○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 ○ 6 ○ 7 or more

2. How many children live in your household ?
○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 ○ 6 ○ 7 ○ 8 ○ 9 or more

a. How many children are less than one year of age ?
○ 0 ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 or more

b. How many are ages one through seven (less than 8,0) ?
○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 ○ 6 ○ 7 or more

c. How many children are 8 to 16 ?
○ 0 ○ 1 ○ 2 ○ 3 ○ 4 ○ 5 ○ 6 ○ 7 or more

Interview Date:

MO	DAY	YR
0	0	0
1	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
	5	5
	6	6
	7	7
	8	8
	9	9

3. Which of these phrases best describes the structure of your family ?
Read phrases and mark the oval which best describes the family:
- ○ single parent with child(ren)
- ○ couple with child(ren)
- ○ extended family (including other adults)
- ○ other (mark oval and specify:) _____

Approx. start of core services

MO	DAY	YR
0	0	0
1	1	1
	2	2
	3	3
	4	4
	5	5
	6	6
	7	7
	8	8
	9	9

4. What is the primary source of financial support for the family ?
Read phrases and mark the oval which best describes the family:
- ○ job wages
- ○ alimony and child support
- ○ government assistance
- ○ other (mark oval and specify:) _____

5. Into which of these ranges does your annual family income fall ?
Read phrases and mark the oval which best describes the family:
- ○ under $ 5,000
- ○ $ 5,000 - $ 10,000
- ○ $ 10,000 - $ 15,000
- ○ $ 15,000 - $ 20,000
- ○ $ 20,000 - $ 25,000
- ○ more than $ 25,000

6. I'll read you a list of things children learn as they grow up. Tell me which of them you have helped *(child's name)* with in the past month.

	Child Too Young	Yes, Helped	No, Did not help
a. Nursery rhymes or songs	○	○	○
b. Colors	○	○	○
c. Shapes, such as circle, squares or triangles	○	○	○
d. To write his/her name	○	○	○
e. To remember your address and telephone number	○	○	○
f. To count things	○	○	○
g. To recognize numbers in books	○	○	○
h. To say the "abc's"	○	○	○
i. To recognize letters in books	○	○	○
j. To read words on signs or in books	○	○	○
k. Ideas like "big-little", "up-down", "before-after"	○	○	○

7. I'll read you a list of things that parents and children sometimes talk about or do together. How often do you or your spouse/partner do any of these things with *(child's name)*?

	Child Too Young	Daily	Once / Twice a Week	Once / Twice a Month	Rarely, If Ever	Never
a. Talk with child about school activities or events	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Talk with child about things studied in school	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Talk with child about his/her problems	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Talk with child about expectations for school performance	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Talk with child about future plans and goals	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. Listen to child read	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ask only if child is in primary grades:						
g. Help child with homework	○	○	○	○	○	○
h. Check to see if homework is done	○	○	○	○	○	○

8. How well do you think *(child's name)* will do in school? Do you think *(child's name)* will do: *Read response choices to parent. Mark only one oval*

○ a. Very well
○ b. Well
○ c. About average
○ d. Poorly
○ e. Very poorly
○ f. Don't know

9. How likely do you think it is that *(child's name)* will graduate from high school? Do you think *(child's name)* is: *Read response choices to parent. Mark only one oval*

○ a. Very likely to graduate from high school
○ b. Somewhat likely
○ c. Not very likely to graduate
○ d. Probably will not graduate from high school

Ask only if the answer to #8 was (a) or (b).

10. What is the highest you think *(child's name)* will get in school ? *Mark highest choice.*

- ○ a. Do you think *(child's name)* will graduate from college ?

If YES: ○ b. Do you think *(child's name)* will attend graduate school after college (for example to become a doctor or lawyer) ?

If NO: ○ c. Do you think *(child's name)* will go to vocational, trade or business school after high school ?

If NO: ○ d. Do you think *(child's name)* will graduate from high school but won't go any further in school ?

11. Here are some statements about children. I will read each statement and then I want you to tell me if you **agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly**. Think of *(child's name)* when answering. Here is one for practice. I'll read the statement:

All children need hugs sometimes.

Do you **agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly** with that statement ? OK. Let's go on with the rest of the statements.

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly	Refused Don't Know
a. Much of my child's learning will take place before he/she enters kindergarten or first grade.	○	○	○	○	○
b. My child needs to play with me.	○	○	○	○	○
c. Playing with my child makes me feel restless.	○	○	○	○	○
d. It is hard for me to tell when my child has learned something.	○	○	○	○	○
e. It is difficult for me to think of things to say to my child during play.	○	○	○	○	○
f. Playing with my child improves the child's behavior.	○	○	○	○	○
g. More of my child's learning at this age takes place by watching people and things rather than being told.	○	○	○	○	○
h. It is difficult for me to stay interested when playing with my child.	○	○	○	○	○
i. I scold my child when (he/she) doesn't learn.	○	○	○	○	○
j. I imitate my child's speech when we play so that the child understands.	○	○	○	○	○
k. My child learns by playing with other children.	○	○	○	○	○
l. If we play whenever my child wants to, not much learning will take place.	○	○	○	○	○
m. My child's education is the responsibility of our family.	○	○	○	○	○
i. I really like to teach my child something new.	○	○	○	○	○

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A P P E N D I X B

EVEN START/ Project Family

A Federal EVEN START Program

The Seattle Public Schools

COLLABORATIVE ADVISORY COUNCIL

NAME	*AGENCY/ADDRESS*
Chairperson:	
Christine Cassidy Executive Director	Washington Literacy Council 1100 Denny Way Seattle, WA 98109
Vice Chairperson:	
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